



## COMMANDING GENERALS SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY STATEMENT

**Sexual Assault is a violent and insidious crime** that has negatively impacted our society and, unfortunately, the United States Marine Corps. This violent act permeates every age, race, and gender and needs to be confronted with strong opposition. Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by the use of force, threats, intimidation or abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent.

**Sexual Assault is a crime and will not be tolerated.** As Marines, the core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment guide our conduct and are the heart of our character. The pervasive crime of sexual assault is incompatible with our values and taints our legacy as America's Force in Readiness. Sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexist behaviors erode our institution and destroy the faith and trust between service members and their leaders. Each of us is responsible for the elimination of these toxic elements of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexist behavior from our Corps. Within the Marine Corps community, none of us should decide that it's "not our business" when someone is in danger, especially if the situation may lead to a potential sexual assault.

Prevention of sexual assault takes many forms, starting with knowing and employing the tactics for bystander intervention (direct, distract, delegate) and continuing with engaged leadership to demonstrate the moral courage to uphold and enforce a zero tolerance for such heinous behaviors. Statistics also show that alcohol is a common denominator that enhances the likelihood for dangerous and potentially criminal situations. Research consistently indicates that alcohol is often the "weapon of choice" for most offenders. Regardless of its consumption, alcohol is not an excuse for violating the clear standards of behavior that are inherent to our Corps.

It takes a tremendous amount of courage to come forward and report a sexual assault. All victims of sexual assault must have confidence of the Marine Corps commitment to ensure he or she will be treated with the utmost dignity, sensitivity, and respect while receiving the appropriate medical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual assistance. Victims who elect to make an **unrestricted report** of sexual assault must have confidence that steps will be taken to ensure their identity will only be released to those who have a need-to-know. Victims who elect to file a **restricted report** will have their privacy honored to utmost extent possible while receiving the appropriate care requested.

To cultivate an honorable and healthy climate that proudly reflects the Marine Corps values, 1st Marine Division commanders and leaders on all levels will familiarize themselves with the contents of the MCO 1752.5B, "Sexual Assault Prevention and Response". Commanders will appoint, at a minimum, two Uniform Victim Advocates (UVAs) at each Battalion/Regiment. Commanders shall ensure that UVAs receive the 40 hour certified training and complete the DSAACP credentialing process. Commanders will utilize UVAs to conduct required annual SAPR training, pre-deployment sexual assault briefs, new-join briefs, and "Take A Stand" for NCOs. When sexual assaults occur, commanders shall utilize the resources available through UVAs and Command SARC to respond to the needs of victims.

I want every member of the 1st Marine Division to know of my commitment to eradicating sexual assault from within our ranks. To attack the problem of sexual assault, each of us must work as a team to create a climate that is free from behaviors that are incompatible with everything it means to part of the Marine Corps.

To report a Sexual Assault or to speak with a Victim Advocate, call the 24/7 MCBCP Helpline (760) 500-1707 or the DoD Safe HelpLine at (877) 995-5247.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "L. D. Nicholson".

L. D. NICHOLSON  
COMMANDING GENERAL